

By Senator Margolis

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to public K-12 educational instruction; amending s. 1003.42, F.S.; requiring physical education on a full-year basis for students in grades 1 through 8; requiring development of a physical education program; amending s. 1003.43, F.S.; increasing physical education credit requirements and decreasing elective credit requirements for high school graduation; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules for satisfaction of certain credit requirements; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, the number of overweight children in the United States has doubled in the past two decades, creating a generation at much higher risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other serious health problems, and

WHEREAS, the physical well-being of students has a direct impact on their ability to achieve academically, and proof now exists that students achieve optimally when they are physically fit, and

WHEREAS, physical education classes have been cut back or eliminated in many schools to provide more preparation time for standardized testing, and fewer than one in ten schools nationwide provide daily physical education, and

WHEREAS, the 1996 Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health recommended that all students in kindergarten through grade 12 receive daily, quality physical education, and

1 WHEREAS, structured physical activity significantly
2 improves mental focus and concentration levels in young
3 children, and children who spend more time in daily physical
4 education show higher levels of academic success, and

5 WHEREAS, developmentally appropriate physical activity
6 helps young people develop skills important to academic
7 performance, such as self-discipline, teamwork, and
8 leadership, and also increases self-esteem and decreases
9 anxiety and stress in adolescents, and

10 WHEREAS, physical education classes offer unique
11 instruction related to sportsmanship, skill development, and
12 fitness and concomitantly provide social, developmental,
13 cognitive, emotional, and health benefits, NOW, THEREFORE,

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. Paragraph (s) is added to subsection (2) of
18 section 1003.42, Florida Statutes, to read:

19 1003.42 Required instruction.--

20 (2) Members of the instructional staff of the public
21 schools, subject to the rules of the State Board of Education
22 and the district school board, shall teach efficiently and
23 faithfully, using the books and materials required, following
24 the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved
25 methods of instruction, the following:

26 (s) Physical education on a full-year basis to
27 students in grades 1 through 8. Each district school board
28 shall develop a physical education program that stresses
29 physical fitness and nutrition and encourages healthy, active
30 lifestyles and shall submit the program to the department for
31 approval. The department shall permit participation in an

1 organized sport provided through the school or by an
2 organization outside of school, with documentation of
3 participation, as part of the physical education program.

4 Section 2. Paragraphs (j) and (k) of subsection (1)
5 and paragraph (a) of subsection (6) of section 1003.43,
6 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

7 1003.43 General requirements for high school
8 graduation.--

9 (1) Graduation requires successful completion of
10 either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12
11 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits
12 shall be distributed as follows:

13 (j)1. One credit in physical education to include
14 assessment, improvement, and maintenance of personal fitness.
15 Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior
16 varsity or varsity level, for two full seasons, shall satisfy
17 the one-credit requirement in physical education if the
18 student passes a competency test on personal fitness with a
19 score of "C" or better. ~~The competency test on personal~~
20 ~~fitness must be developed by the Department of Education.~~ A
21 district school board may not require that the one credit in
22 physical education be taken during the 9th grade year.

23 2. For students entering grade 9 in the 2005-2006
24 school year and thereafter, four credits in physical education
25 to include assessment, improvement, and maintenance of
26 personal fitness and nutrition and encouragement of healthy,
27 active lifestyles. According to rules adopted by the State
28 Board of Education under ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54,
29 participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior
30 varsity or varsity level or in an organized sport provided by
31 an organization outside of school, with documentation of

1 participation, shall satisfy the credit requirements, or
2 portions thereof, in physical education if the student passes
3 a competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or
4 better.

5
6 The competency test on personal fitness must be developed by
7 the Department of Education. Completion of one semester with a
8 grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a physical
9 activity class that requires participation in marching band
10 activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a Reserve
11 Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class a significant
12 component of which is drills shall satisfy a one-half credit
13 requirement in physical education. This one-half credit may
14 not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the
15 requirement for adaptive physical education under an
16 individual educational plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

17 (k) Eight and one-half elective credits. For students
18 entering grade 9 in the 2005-2006 school year and thereafter,
19 five and one-half elective credits.

20
21 District school boards may award a maximum of one-half credit
22 in social studies and one-half elective credit for student
23 completion of nonpaid voluntary community or school service
24 work. Students choosing this option must complete a minimum
25 of 75 hours of service in order to earn the one-half credit in
26 either category of instruction. Credit may not be earned for
27 service provided as a result of court action. District school
28 boards that approve the award of credit for student volunteer
29 service shall develop guidelines regarding the award of the
30 credit, and school principals are responsible for approving
31 specific volunteer activities. A course designated in the

1 Course Code Directory as grade 9 through grade 12 that is
2 taken below the 9th grade may be used to satisfy high school
3 graduation requirements or Florida Academic Scholars award
4 requirements as specified in a district school board's student
5 progression plan. A student shall be granted credit toward
6 meeting the requirements of this subsection for equivalent
7 courses, as identified pursuant to s. 1007.271(6), taken
8 through dual enrollment.

9 (6) The Legislature recognizes that adult learners are
10 unique in situation and needs. The following graduation
11 requirements are therefore instituted for students enrolled in
12 adult general education in accordance with s. 1004.93 in
13 pursuit of a high school diploma:

14 (a) The credits ~~one credit~~ in physical education
15 required for graduation ~~under, pursuant to~~ subsection (1) are,
16 ~~is~~ not required for graduation and shall be substituted with
17 elective credits, ~~credit~~ keeping the total credits needed for
18 graduation consistent with subsection (1).

19 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.

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22 SENATE SUMMARY

23 Requires students in grades 1 through 8 to take physical
24 education for the full academic year. Revises
25 requirements for high school graduation by increasing the
26 required number of physical education credits and
27 decreasing the required number of elective credits.
28 Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules
29 relating to the satisfaction of certain requirements for
30 high school graduation.
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